

Tom Horne  
Superintendent

# N.E.W.S

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## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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For more information, contact: Doug Nick, Interim Press Secretary (602) 364-1945

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### **HORNE PREDICTS NEW *FLORES* LAW TO BE APPROVED BY COURT**

*Legislative bill becomes law today*

(PHOENIX, Thursday, March 9, 2006) -- The *Flores* legislation passed last week by the state legislature becomes law today, after the Governor chose to allow five days to pass without a veto or her signature. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne is predicting its approval by a federal court and has issued the following statement in support of the law:

“For a number of years, the Federal Court has been repeatedly calling for a scientific basis for the amount the state decides to spend on English language learners. The amount cannot be arbitrary. It must be scientifically supported.

“This law is the most scientific of all possible ways of determining the costs: a school-by-school determination of actual costs.

“Some schools teach English more effectively than others, not because they spend more money, but because they use more effective techniques.

“An important part of this law is the provision for technical assistance. The Department has six people in its English Acquisition section. They are required by Court Order to monitor at least 50 schools a year, and this leaves inadequate time and resources for technical assistance. Under this law, the English Acquisition section would be increased to 26. They would then be able to give technical assistance: determining what schools get good results, what methods they use, and helping schools that do not get good results to imitate those methods. This would make a tremendous difference in the success of our English Acquisition programs.

“The Department has proven that, where it does have the resources to give technical assistance, it gives technical assistance effectively. Proposition 301 provided substantial resources for the Department to work with underperforming schools. Last year there were 81 schools that were in their second year of underperforming. Under the Arizona system, if they under performed for three years, they would become failing schools, and the Department would have to intervene. The Department therefore focused its technical assistance on those 81 schools. Of the 81, 70 increased student learning enough to produce higher test scores that qualified the schools as performing schools.

“With adequate resources, as provided by this law, the Department can produce similar success in giving technical assistance to English language learner programs, and have the students learn English more quickly and more effectively.”

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